

The *art* of after-school care

YS homework, art programs enrich students' afternoons

Story & photos by Maria Higgins

After a long day at Patch High School, eighth grader Rose Crane heads across post to the Youth Services center.

While scores of other teens blow off steam on the YS's skateboard ramps or at its pool table, Crane hunkers down in one of the relatively quiet study rooms for a few more hours of algebra, geography, or whatever homework is demanding her attention.

Crane, who loves this time of day, is going to see her efforts start to pay off soon – and not just on her report card.

She is earning points toward prizes for participating in a special "Power Hour" homework program and for using the services of Patricia Tyson, a dedicated homework/computer teacher hired by the YS to help teens get on top (or stay on top) of their schoolwork.

Meanwhile, just a thick divider wall away, another group of teens descends upon the colorfully cluttered lair of Wil Seda, who leads the YS's new art program.

An outlet for artists

Kids who hang out with Seda won't score any points. *Pointers*, yes – tips from the talented ex-infantryman on how to tweak their latest clay creation, perhaps, or how to cleverly shadow a drawing that's been days in the making.

The atmosphere on Seda's side is decidedly rowdier, but the accomplishments are no less significant.

Students' finished projects line the walls, competing with Seda's prized pieces for attention.

More than a few students have seen their artistic endeavors grow beyond the pages of heavily doodled notebooks to take shape as actual works of art, thanks to Seda's encouragement.

Jemmie Collins, 6th Area Support Group YS program manager, confirmed the success of both programs, and said she hopes more parents will steer their sixth-through-12th graders Tyson's and Seda's way.

"About 50 or 60 students a day come to the [YS] center for various activities like com-

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Jemmie Collins
Youth Services

puter lab and open recreation," Collins said.

She estimated that the homework and Power Hour program sees about 10 to 15 "regulars," while Seda can count on seeing a half dozen drop-ins at any given time.

'A little more learning'

Feedback from parents, said Collins, has been excellent. "I'm hearing how they're happy that someone is giving kids a little more learning after school," she said.

Master Sgt. Sheila Williamson is one such fan. Her son, Seth, "ordered me" to tell somebody how wonderful Patricia Tyson is," Williamson said when she relayed praise to Collins.

"He says she goes out of her way to help the students and is very nice and very smart," Williamson said. "It's not often we hear good things about homework, but she's one of those nice things, so thanks!"

Should parents themselves need any help understanding their offspring's assignments, Tyson is available to break it down for them as well.

Crucial to getting kids to come regularly, she said, is establishing a comfortable rapport with each teen – as is being sure to inject as much fun and enjoyment into homework time as possible.

To this end, Tyson offers incentive problems that students can solve each day to earn even more points toward pizza and ice cream sprees, calculators and other rewards.

The trick, she said, is to do so "without really giving them extra work – just things that will add to and reinforce their school curriculum."

Getting kids to spend enrichment time with Seda, Collins acknowledged, doesn't require extra incentives. The fun nature of art, together with Seda's easy-going accep-

tance (not to mention occasional guitar playing) are enough of a draw themselves.

Collins, Seda and Tyson are just waiting for more students and parents to get the picture.

For more information call Jemmie Collins at 430-8214/civ. 0711-680-8214 or e-mail collinsj@6asg.army.mil.



[Top] From a lump of clay to a work of art: One of the 6th ASG Youth Services' after-school programs gives students hands-on training in sculpture, drawing and other forms of artistic expression.

[Bottom] Wil Seda, contract art instructor, discusses the finer points of a project with students at the Patch YS.

Patch High advisory committee needs community input

The Patch American High School Advisory Committee is an elected board of students, parents and faculty who meet monthly to discuss concerns and offer advice to the PHS principal.

The SAC doesn't make school policy; it is an advisory board that represents the views of students, parents and teachers. It also keeps the community's leadership aware of its issues through participation in Installation Advisory Committee meetings.

To be effective and representative, the SAC must know the views of students, parents and teachers. SAC urges everyone to let them know the issues important to you.

Students, parents, and faculty members are invited to attend SAC meetings held the third Wednesday of every month at 3:30 p.m. in the PHS Media Center.

Community members may drop written suggestions in the SAC box in the PHS office or call Steve Beatty at 0711-680-8472.

Parents' Night Out

Drop the kids off at Patch Youth Services
Dec. 5, 6:30 to 11 p.m.
and enjoy some time to yourself.

This special night is open to
all children registered with CYS.

For reservations call any CYS facility
or 430-7480/civ. 0711-680-7480.